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HORACE WALPOLE'S MEMOIRS OF THE REIGN OF GEORGE THE THIRD, II.

IN the first part of this article an attempt was made to show that Walpole's *Memoirs of George III.*, supposedly written between the years 1766 and 1772, give expression to a theory of the reign of George III. which is inconsistent with ideas expressed by the author in letters written between 1760 and 1772. It was discovered, further, that in 1775 Walpole "transcribed" at least a considerable portion of the *Memoirs*, and that in 1784 he inserted some new material in the fourth volume. And, finally, it was found that the insertions of 1784 expressed opinions in marked contrast with the opinions of the letters written before 1775, but identical with the opinions of the letters written after that date. A more difficult question now presents itself: to what extent were the first three volumes revised in 1784? Having answered this question, an effort will be made to estimate the general importance of the revision as a whole.

It will be remembered that the only precise references to a date subsequent to 1775, except in the foot-notes, occur in the fourth volume. It will also be remembered that the note in which Walpole says "as I transcribe these *Memoirs*—in June, 1775", is at page 24 of volume three. It might be assumed, therefore, that Walpole continued the "transcribing" until he reached the ministry of Lord North, and then laid the work aside because the American war was changing his opinion of Lord North, and because even the beginning of North's ministry could be treated satisfactorily only after the result of the quarrel with America was known. This assumption would explain why there is no reference to a date subsequent to 1775 in the first three volumes, which is a fact needing explanation if we suppose that the first three volumes, as well as the fourth, were revised in 1784. The difficulty with this hypothesis is that there are many passages in the first volume which, without specifically referring to dates or events subsequent to 1775, have all the other marks leading one to suppose that they were written in 1784 rather than at any earlier date. These passages are scattered throughout the first volume, and they embody opinions about Bute and the "Junto", the Scots and the Tories, the prerogative, Lord North, and the king, which we do not find Walpole giving expression to elsewhere until after 1775. Let us examine some of these passages.

The tone of much of the first volume is given at the outset. Two paragraphs are devoted to elaborating the statement that "No British monarch has ascended the throne with so many advantages as George the Third."¹ And yet, in spite of these advantages, "A passionate, domineering woman, and a Favourite, without talents, soon drew a cloud over this shining prospect. Without anticipating events too hastily, let it suffice to say that the measure of war was pushed, without even a desire that it should be successful; and that, although successful, it was unnaturally checked by a peace, too precipitate, too indigested, and too shameful, to merit the coldest eulogy of moderation."² At the time of the peace, as we have seen from the letters, Walpole was for peace at any price. To be sure, he did not vote for the peace. But neither did he vote against it. His reason for not voting at all was undoubtedly the fact that Fox tried to bribe him to vote with the government. Now, if Walpole wanted peace at any price, as the letters assert, this offer of a bribe put him in an impossible position: he wished to vote for the peace, but he wished also to show Fox that he could not be bribed; to leave the House before the vote was taken was the most natural escape from such a dilemma.³ On the other hand, if Walpole believed, as he says in the *Memoirs*, that the peace was "too shameful to merit the coldest eulogy of moderation", there was every reason for voting against it; the offer of a bribe would be only an additional reason for doing just that thing. These events, it is true, occurred before Walpole began to write the *Memoirs*; but at no time from 1766 to 1772 does he express, in the letters, any pronounced opposition to the Peace of Paris. He says very little about it, indeed, until towards the close of the American war. Then, the prospect of another treaty with France, likely indeed to prove shameful, turned his attention to the last one, which now seemed shameful too. France "never wants a Lord Bolingbroke or a Lord Bute to negotiate for our shame", he writes in 1780.⁴ And again, in 1783, he refers to "The Peace of Paris, more ignominious as the termination of a most triumphant war".⁵

¹ *Memoirs*, I. 3, 4.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 5.

³ Walpole explains his refusal to vote for or against the peace, in the *Memoirs*, thus: "Yet was I not so steeled by the glories of the war as to be insensible to the yearnings of humanity; and therefore, ignominious as the articles were, my conscience would not suffer me to speak against a treaty that would stop such effusion of blood." *Memoirs*, I. 167. The sentiments expressed in the letters (see first installment, January number, p. 262, n. 41) and Walpole's own account of Fox's attempt to bribe him (*Memoirs*, I. 168) make it impossible to accept this explanation as the true one.

⁴ *Letters*, XI. 235.

⁵ *Ibid.*, XII. 412.

It is in keeping with this attitude towards the Peace of Paris that Walpole takes pains in the *Memoirs* to justify Pitt in resigning in October, 1761, although in the letters he condemns him, and is merry and bitter by turns over the pension. In the letters we learn that the resignation is a fatal event. "Next to pitying our country . . . I feel for the young King. It is hard to have so bright a dawn so soon overcast!"⁶ "It is a most unhappy event."⁷ "You may see what a beneficial, what a splendid peace we might have had; you will not so easily find the reason why we rejected it."⁸ The *Memoirs* read very differently. "His hands tied, the nation affronted, and duped by the partial breaking off of the treaty with France, no proper resentment permitted against Spain, Mr. Pitt found he could do no farther good. His character had been lost by acquiescence; and nothing could rouse the nation, but his quitting the sphere of business, where he was so treacherously controlled."⁹ In the next chapter Walpole details the speeches in Parliament in the November following the resignation. Pitt's great speech is given at considerable length, and is characterized, at the close, as "guarded, artful, and inflammatory".¹⁰ But at the close of the chapter there is a paragraph which reads like an apology for leaving with the reader what is perhaps an unfavorable impression of the Great Commoner. The tone of the paragraph is so in keeping with the tone of the letters of 1783-1784 that it may be worth while to quote it in full.

The recapitulation of many speeches may perhaps weary the reader, but, in equity, he must remember that at this period at least it was essential to detail them. When Mr. Pitt was driven from the management of the war, he existed as a public man; but in his speeches and past services, his own defence of his measures was necessary from his own mouth. Libels on libels were published against him, and he wrote none. I am sensible that I do not do justice to his arguments, and less to his eloquence; but what I give was faithfully taken from his own mouth in the House of Commons; and unless better transcripts appear, this rude sketch may be welcome to posterity. No flattery is intended to him. When I thought him blameable, I have marked it, as will appear hereafter, with the same impartiality. The debates, too, of a free nation, arrived at the summit of its glory, may be worthy the attention of future times. Our descendants will see what their ancestors were in arms and eloquence, and what liberty they enjoyed of discussing their own interests. Grant, Heaven, they may not read it with a sigh; reading it in bondage and ignominy!¹¹

⁶ *Letters*, V. 124.

⁷ *Ibid.*, V. 125.

⁸ *Ibid.*, V. 141. See also pp. 129, 131, 133, 135, 139, 141.

⁹ *Memoirs*, I. 62.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

The shameful peace and the reverses of Pitt were due, Walpole gives us to understand, to Lord Bute and his tools, the Scots and the Tories. These constituted the "Junto" which, through the princess, exercised a controlling influence in the government.¹² And the settled purpose of the Junto was to restore the prerogative. "The King *would* be King", it was publicly asserted. "The prerogative was to shine out";¹³ "The views of the Court were so fully manifested afterwards, that no doubt can be entertained but a plan had been early formed of carrying the prerogative to very unusual heights."¹⁴ "The Tories . . . came to Court . . . but they came with all their old prejudices. They abjured their ancient master, but retained their principles; . . . *Prerogative* became a fashionable word; and the language of the times was altered before the Favourite dared to make any variation in the Ministry."¹⁵ The influence of the Junto did not end with Lord Bute's ministry, for, as Bute himself said, "whatever the ministers might think, they should find he himself was minister still." And Walpole adds, "A memorable sentence, confirmed by facts, and of which the contrary assertion was vainly attempted afterwards to be imposed upon the world."¹⁶ Lord North, too, instead of the "honest" and "moderate" man of the letters, is a tool of the Junto. "Lord North was the chief manager for the Court . . . his coarse figure, and rude untempered style, contributed to make the cause into which he had unnecessarily thrust himself appear still more odious."¹⁷

This attitude, which pervades the first volume, is not at all what one expects after reading the letters of the period when the first draft was composed. There is reason, as will be seen presently, for supposing that in the original draft Walpole was mainly intent on detailing the events of the period covered by the second and third volumes, which was the period in which he was himself active in politics, and that the events of the period covered by the first volume were briefly sketched as a kind of introduction. Whether this assumption is tenable or not, but especially if it is tenable, we should expect to find in the first volume less emphasis on the Junto and Lord Bute and more on the "Cabal" and Grenville, because after 1763 it was never Bute so much as Grenville whom Walpole disliked and feared: it was Grenville who was responsible for the dismissal of Conway; it was Grenville who bungled the Regency affair.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 13-16, 29, 42, 44, 47, 109, 115, 140, 158, 211.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

it was Grenville who was the leader of the opposition during the later ministries in which Walpole was interested. Bute, on the other hand, was the principal enemy of Grenville and is therefore not infrequently in Walpole's good graces; he would have Bute bind himself hand and foot to Pitt rather than submit to such wretches as Grenville, and Bute later served the very useful purpose of keeping the Pitt and Grafton ministries firm. Nor should we expect to find so much emphasis on the danger from the prerogative, since, after 1763, it was never the prerogative so much as the aristocracy that Walpole felt to be the chief danger to the Constitution.¹⁸ The whole tone of the first volume, indeed, in so far as it deals with these matters, is inconsistent with Walpole's known views at the time he was writing the original draft, but is consistent with his known views after the American war.

In the second and third volumes, on the other hand, this is not the case, or it is the case to a very much less extent. With few exceptions¹⁹ the attitude towards Bute and Pitt, towards the Scots and the Tories, towards the princess and the king, is much the same as in the letters. The Junto or the Cabal is mentioned, but it is as often a cabal against the king as in his favor.²⁰ The style too is on the whole more matter-of-fact; the bitter or the regretful tone of the period of the American war is less pronounced when it appears at all, which it rarely does. And yet, if these volumes were revised in 1784, one would expect to find here not only the style of the later period, but some reference to the American war and the loss of the colonies, for the second volume deals with the Stamp Act, which certainly offered an excellent opportunity to connect the early part of the reign with the later. The remarks on the Stamp Act, however, are just what one might expect Walpole to make in 1775. He gives several pages to the subject, but the nearest he comes to mentioning the events of the period after 1775 is in saying that Grenville ignored the "opportunity he threw into the hands of Spain and France, of exciting a mutinous spirit in our colonies, and when occasion should serve, of throwing assistance into them against their parent".²¹ That the war with the colonies was the opportunity of France and Spain, Walpole, or any one else, could of course foresee in 1775.²² The passages on the Stamp Act seem to show, therefore, that this part of the *Memoirs* was revised in 1775 but not in 1784. There are some other passages in the second volume that indicate

¹⁸ See first installment, January number, pp. 262-263.

¹⁹ See *Memoirs*, II. 2, 66, 71, 184; III. 147.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, II. 13, 14, 66, 67, 73, 75, 115, 122, 129, 297; III. 158.

²¹ *Ibid.*, II. 51.

²² Cf. letter to Mann, September 7, 1775. *Letters*, IX. 245.

the same thing.²³ It is not till near the end of the third volume that we find passages which recall the ideas and spirit of 1784.²⁴ Is it probable, then, that the revision of 1775 was discontinued near the end of the third volume, that in 1784 the last part of the third and the whole of the fourth volume were revised, and that at the same time, or perhaps later still, the first volume was revised a second time? The adoption of such an hypothesis, however, makes it necessary to explain why Walpole should have thought it necessary to revise the first volume a second time without in like manner revising the second and third volumes; if the revision of 1775 was satisfactory for the latter, why was it not satisfactory for the former as well? A possible answer to this question will suggest itself as soon as we know Walpole's reasons for writing the *Memoirs* originally, and his reasons for revising them in 1784. Let us consider these two points.

What was Walpole's purpose in writing the *Memoirs* originally? In answering this question it must be remembered that Walpole was the author of many books. His earliest ambition was to be a poet,²⁵ and it cannot be supposed that he was ever indifferent to fame.²⁶ To be sure, he wished not to be classed with authors, and affected to regard his own works as of no consequence whatever.²⁷ The truth is that Walpole was as proud and sensitive as any man alive.²⁸ What he despised was the professional hack writer, hat in hand before some noble patron or other.²⁹ What he feared was to be known to strive diligently for excellence and then to be known to fall short of it. To be known as a lazy trifler whose cleverness enabled him to throw off many books without effort, was well enough; even if he did no more than fashion odd curios of literature, interesting to "men of parts", no one could say that he had failed, since he had never had high aims. It was not indifference to fame, but the sensitive fear of having loved and lost, that is at the root of Walpole's literary pose.³⁰ Writing was the business of

²³ Cf. paragraph at top of p. 67, vol. II., with note 1 of same page. In like manner notice the implication of note 1, p. 242, of same volume.

²⁴ Cf. *Memoirs*, III. 174, 179, 182, 232, 260.

²⁵ *Letters*, VII. 279. See also VIII. 245.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, V. 268; VII. 161, 180, 386; X. 305.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, V. 187, 237, 349; VII. 63, 161, 404; VIII. 41; IX. 194, 384; X. 29, 305; XII. 77; XIII. 202; XV. 331.

²⁸ "I believe I have more pride than most men alive", etc. *Ibid.*, XV. 189.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, V. 448; VII. 63, 332; XV. 189.

³⁰ "I have learnt and have practised the humiliating task of comparing myself with great authors; and that comparison has annihilated all the flattery that self-love could suggest." *Ibid.*, XIII. 204. Walpole's naïveté in respect to the *Castle of Otranto* is well known. See *ibid.*, VI. 180, 194, 198, 200, 205, 213. For further evidence on this point, see *ibid.*, VII. 161; VIII. 89; IX. 384; XIV. 21, 56; XV. 331, 334.

his life, and he wrote the *Memoirs* partly because he found the business of his life amusing, and had, always, to be writing something. "It amuses me", he says, in explaining why he took up the task again in 1771. "I like to give my opinion on what I have seen."³¹ And when the work ceased to amuse him he threw it aside.³²

Nevertheless, Walpole had undoubtedly a more serious purpose than amusement: he wrote for posterity. During his lifetime probably no one knew that he was engaged on the *Memoirs*;³³ but he took good care that they should be published after his death.³⁴ Walpole was one of those men for whom posterity, no less than adversity, has its uses. He liked to prepare surprises, and one can imagine him chuckling over the little bombshells he would throw into the next century. And the *Memoirs* would surprise many people, and set them right on some things; in the next century, at least, they would know that he, Walpole, already old and half-forgotten by the young of his own generation, knew better than any one what was going on, and had a finger in the pie, although he pulled out no plums.³⁵ That Walpole's main purpose originally was to relate the part he had himself taken in the politics of the reign of George III., he practically says in the opening paragraph of the *Memoirs*; having declared, in his *Memoirs* of George II., the intention of retiring from politics, he proposes now to "set forth the true causes" that induced him to engage in them again.³⁶ Two facts confirm this supposition: he began the *Memoirs* in 1766, just at the close of the period during which he was most active in politics; and he grew tired of the task and laid the *Memoirs* aside for a time, for all time so far as he then knew, when he reached the end of the first Parliament of George III., which was the date of his own retirement from Parliament.³⁷ I assume, therefore, that in compos-

³¹ *Memoirs*, III. 124.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 107.

³³ The letters contain no mention of the *Memoirs*. There is one allusion to them. "I . . . think only of finishing the two or three other things I have begun—and of those, nothing but the last volume of *Painters* is designed for the present public." To Gray, February 18, 1768. *Letters*, VII. 163.

³⁴ *Memoirs*, I., preface, p. xvi.

³⁵ "What pains one takes to be forgotten!", he exclaims, apropos of making an index. *Letters*, VII. 386. "Authors are said to labour for posterity; for my part I find I did not write even for the rising generation. . . . The friends I have lost were, I find, more than half the public to me. It is as difficult to write for young people, as to talk to them." *Ibid.*, VIII. 89. See also, VII. 53, 163, 180, 427; VIII. 3, 41; IX. 85, 384; XIII. 202, 213.

³⁶ *Memoirs*, I. 1.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, III. 107. In resuming the *Memoirs* in 1771, he explains that after all the end of the preceding Parliament was "no era of anything but of my own dereliction of politics". *Ibid.*, p. 125.

ing the original draft Walpole was mainly intent on setting forth in some detail the events of the period from 1764 to 1768 for the purpose of explaining to posterity the part he had himself taken in those events.

The revision of 1775 was undertaken doubtless for the very natural purpose of improving the literary form of the work. The original draft was based upon notes taken contemporaneously³⁸ and upon the letters written to Sir Horace Mann,³⁹ and was, I imagine, little more than a series of rather full notes arranged chronologically under specific dates—in fact, a kind of annalistic chronicle.⁴⁰ Walpole, who had a sense for style and was a most fastidious man in all he did, would naturally wish to leave the *Memoirs* in as readable a form as might be. In 1775 he felt that he was nearing the end of life; it was time to put “his house in order”, and preparing the *Memoirs* for the press was doubtless a part of that necessary process.⁴¹ But the revision of 1784 was for a very different purpose. He wished quite sincerely to point out to posterity the errors of his own time. Affecting to be a mere spectator of events, highly amused by the squabbles of a profligate age, Walpole was at bottom a man upon whom events made a profound impression. The humanitarian and cosmopolitan sentiment of the century was, in his case, only a thin veneer. At the heart of the pretended “little Englander” was the raging imperialist, proud of his country's conquests and profoundly humiliated by her reverses.⁴² This desire to point the moral was present even in the earlier period, and he doubtless speaks with entire sincerity when he says, in resuming the *Memoirs* in 1771, that he writes not only for amusement but also “to warn posterity (however vain such zeal) against the folly and corruption and profligacy of the times I have lived in”.⁴³ As he grew older this desire became more insistent. The reverses of the American war entered like iron into his soul, and he felt that if he

³⁸ *Ibid.*, I. 84; II. 114; III. 107, 124.

³⁹ The *Memoirs* were begun August 18, 1766, and in September of the same year we find him writing to Mann: “I have begged you to send home my letters. Pray do: there are five years to come, and I have particular occasion for some passages.” *Letters*, VII. 38. See also, p. 83; VIII. 3, 34.

⁴⁰ Walpole calls the *Memoirs* annals in one place. *Memoirs*, IV. 85. The *Memoirs* are mostly written in flowing narrative style, but every now and then we come upon the annalistic style. Cf. I. 330–332; II. 296; III. 4–10, 33–38. The original draft of the *Memoirs* was perhaps not very different in form from the *Journal of the Reign of King George the Third from the year 1771 to 1783*.

⁴¹ “I am . . . sorting and burning papers, in short, *setting my house in order* against a certain time that happens but once in one's life.” To the Countess of Upper Ossory, November 14, 1774. *Letters*, IX. 96. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 388.

⁴² See first installment, January number, p. 261, n. 34.

⁴³ *Memoirs*, III. 125.

could not prevent the evil he could at least correct the lying newspapers of the time⁴⁴ and set posterity right on the meaning of that great event and of the whole reign of George III. as well. He says in a passage of the *Memoirs* written in 1784:

I should have observed the whole progress of the reign hitherto with little judgment, if I had not a worse opinion of the spirit that has actuated it, than I had when I first entertained doubts of its designs against the constitution. However, instead of seeing with my eyes, I recommended [recommend?] to posterity to use their own discernment, abandon the author, accept what truths he has delivered, correct his mistakes, condemn his prejudices, make the best use you can of any wholesome lessons he has inculcated, avoid such errors as he has pointed out. He has written prodigiously too much, if no man shall be the wiser for his writings. He laments not his pains, nor shall deprecate censure if a single person becomes a real patriot, or a better citizen from perusing this work.⁴⁵

That these were the main motives for the later revision, is confirmed by the passages which are known to have been inserted at that time; practically all of them aim to connect the earlier history with the American war; they emphasize, for the purpose of showing that connection, the sinister designs of the crown, the subserviency and malevolence of the Scots and the Tories, the indolence and incapacity of Lord North; they betray the tone that is so common in the letters of the later period—a kind of sad and settled melancholy, as of one who regrets a catastrophe that is too fully accomplished to be avoided and too fatal ever to be quite undone.⁴⁶

These considerations suggest an answer to the question as to why Walpole should have thought it necessary to revise the first volume in 1784 without revising the second and third volumes also. If the main purpose in writing the *Memoirs* originally was to set forth his own share in the politics of the time, the period in which he took an active part would probably be treated more fully than the period in which he took little or no part. The period in which Walpole was active was from 1764 to 1768—from the dismissal of his friend Conway for his vote on general warrants to his own retirement from Parliament. Now, this is just the period covered by the second and third volumes. And that Walpole did in fact deal with this period more fully than with the period from 1760 to 1764 is evident, for, even as the printed *Memoirs* stand, the first

⁴⁴ "History, I believe, seldom contains much truth: but should our daily lying chronicles exist and be consulted, the annals of these days will deserve as little credit as the *Arabian Nights*." *Letters*, XIII. 418. "In such a season of party violence, one cannot learn the truth of what happens in next street; future historians, however, will know it exactly, and, what is more, people will believe them!" *Ibid.*, p. 255. Cf. XII. 141.

⁴⁵ *Memoirs*, IV. 85.

⁴⁶ See passages already noticed. *Ibid.*, IV. 54, 76, 85, 157, 163.

volume (335 pp.) covers three years and eight months, while the second and third volumes (595 pp.) cover only five years and two months. It seems not unreasonable to suppose, therefore, that in the original draft Walpole rather hastily sketched the events of 1760–1764 as a kind of introduction to the real subject of the work, the period in which he was himself active. And if we suppose the revision of 1775 was for the purpose of improving the literary form of the Memoirs, there was no reason at that time for changing either the proportion or the content of the introductory part.

But in what a different light must the Memoirs have appeared to Walpole in 1784! Then he was mainly intent on setting posterity right on the meaning of the American war. This could be done in part by revising the fourth volume, which dealt with the beginning of Lord North's ministry. But only in part; for the deeper meaning of the American war was that in it the king attempted to bring to fruition deep-laid designs which he had harbored from the beginning of his reign, designs which had been fostered by Bute and the Scots and the Tories, designs which had never for a moment been lost sight of. To bring this out, the Memoirs must be more than memoirs of Walpole; they must be memoirs of the reign of George III. in fact as well as in name. A revision of the last volume only would therefore leave something to be desired; it would not achieve the necessary dramatic unity. The events of the first years of the reign, which had been dealt with less fully than the rest, now acquired, in the light of the American war, a new significance, which could be pointed out only by revising the first volume. And a revision of the first volume would be sufficient, for it was just the early years of the reign that offered the best opportunity for proving the contention that Walpole wished to establish: it was then, rather than during the years from 1764 to 1768, that the king, Bute, the Scots and the Tories were most influential. We know from the letters that the only time from 1760 to 1772 that Walpole had much fear of the prerogative was in 1762–1763, during the ministry of Bute himself, and in connection with that very Peace of Paris of which so much is made in the first volume. The second and third volumes, on the contrary, were neither in need of any elaboration, nor did they offer much opportunity, save in connection with the Stamp Act, for the particular kind of revision that Walpole wished to make.

To this hypothesis, which I think best explains all the facts, though I hold to it with no positive convictions, there are two objections which must be noticed. If Walpole did revise the first volume in 1784, it is strange that no mention of a specific date subsequent

to 1775 should appear except in the fourth volume. This fact makes it difficult to suppose that the whole work was revised in 1784, but it loses much of its force if we assume, as I have done, that the revision of 1784 left the greater part of the second and third volumes untouched. In dealing with the events of the fourth volume, there would be a certain appropriateness in referring to the American war, since the fourth volume had to do with the beginning of the very ministry that carried the war through. But in the period covered by the first volume the American question had not yet arisen, and the events of the American war, if mentioned at all, would have, as it were, to be dragged in by the heels. The second objection is of a different sort. In a long note, written probably in 1783 and certainly not earlier, Walpole says that he has changed his opinion many times in respect to Lord Bute's influence with the king, and proceeds to set forth what he then takes to be the truth of the whole matter. The truth, as he then sees it, is that Bute had little direct influence with the king after his resignation in 1763, the real influence after that time being exercised by Jenkinson.⁴⁷ Now, the passages in the first volume which I have supposed to reflect the opinions held by Walpole in 1783-1784 assert, on the contrary, that Bute's influence with the king was undoubted and continuous. Croker, in his review of the *Memoirs* for the *Quarterly*,⁴⁸ made much of this point to show that Walpole took back at the close of his work much that he had said of Bute in the first part of it. However, the note is of less importance than might be supposed. Walpole admits having changed his opinions frequently. He must have done so indeed, for he has another note, written as late as 1784, in which he says positively that Grenville "had fallen because he was not influenced by Lord Bute . . . and that Dowdeswell had fallen from the same cause", and that "in 1783-4, *the secret influence* was no longer secret."⁴⁹ These notes tell us nothing, therefore, except that at one time, either in 1783 or later, Walpole believed that Bute had little influence with the king after his resignation, but that another time, in 1784 or later, he believed no such thing. As there is no reason for believing that the first volume, if it was revised at all after 1775, was revised before 1784, the objection falls to the ground.

The second revision of the first volume, if there was one, may indeed have been made at a much later date than 1784. It will be recalled that throughout the *Memoirs* are many foot-notes that

⁴⁷ *Memoirs*, IV. 88, n. 2.

⁴⁸ *Quarterly Review*, LXXVII. 140.

⁴⁹ *Memoirs*, IV. 75, n. 1.

refer to events or to dates later than 1775. Of these, only three refer to dates later than 1784: one to the date 1786, and two to the date 1788. These three notes are all in the first volume.⁵⁰ The interesting query is therefore suggested whether the first volume was revised as late as 1788? It is quite possible that, in taking up the *Memoirs* after the fall of North, Walpole's intention was only to complete the first revision from the point where it had been interrupted by the American war, and that not until later did it occur to him that the work lacked something in perspective and unity which might be made good by recasting the first volume. At least we know that he must have been rereading the *Memoirs* as late as 1788, since that date occurs in the notes.

In conclusion, it should be observed that the amount of matter inserted during the revision of 1784, at least as far as the evidence goes, was relatively small. The importance of the later insertions, however, does not depend upon their quantity, but upon their quality. Wherever we find Walpole asserting that the reign of George III. was primarily a struggle against the despotic tendencies of the crown, there we have a passage which we can say was inserted after the American war, or one which we can say was very probably inserted after the American war. Most of these passages, besides, are interpretative, discursive, speculative in nature. Indeed, if there is any general test by which one may be guided in distinguishing the original draft from the revision of 1784, it is this: in the original draft Walpole was intent on details, and wished to picture the particular person or situation, and himself most of all; in the revision of 1784, he was intent on principles and general tendencies, and wished to picture the whole reign as a lesson to posterity. In the interval between the writing of the original draft and the revision of 1784, Walpole had changed in more respects than in his view of the meaning of the reign of George III.; his attitude towards the function of the historian,⁵¹ and towards his own *Memoirs* and the purposes they might serve, had changed also. Whether Walpole's later view of the reign of George III. is a truer one on the whole than his earlier view, is a question that might be argued but cannot be argued here. At least, that he had an earlier and a later view is obvious, and it is perhaps well to know that he did.

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⁵⁰ See first installment, January number, p. 258, notes 21 and 22.

⁵¹ In the earlier period Walpole emphasized the necessity of accuracy in details and of strict impartiality in the writing of history. See, for example, *Letters*, IV. 246; V. 149. But in 1785 he wrote: "For my part . . . I hate the cold impartiality recommended to historians", etc. *Ibid.*, XIII. 285. Cf. p. 255; XIV. 235.